

## INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

### Corridor and Planning Studies

#### Overview

The statewide transportation plan provides an integrated planning process starting with an outreach program for public and transportation stakeholder involvement and the development of policy guidance. These activities flow into the systems-level planning activities which provide for the evaluation of system performance, the identification of deficiencies and needs, and the sizing of potential improvement concepts relative to the assessment of financial resources and plan development objectives. The key element in making the transition from the systems-level planning activities to the project development/programming process is the corridor planning process. This chapter outlines the corridor planning studies undertaken and anticipated to be conducted by INDOT as part of the statewide plan development process.

#### Major Corridor Studies

In 1991, the Indiana General Assembly passed legislation that directed INDOT to establish “commerce corridors” in the state. These corridors were defined as, “...that part of a recognized system of highways that: (1) directly facilitates intrastate, interstate, or international commerce and travel; (2) enhances economic vitality and international competitiveness; or (3) provides service to all parts of Indiana and the United States.”

This effort resulted in three major corridor studies: US 31 from Indianapolis to South Bend, SR 26/US 35 from Lafayette to Fort Wayne, and the Southwest Indiana Highway from Evansville to Indianapolis. Of these three, SR 26/US 35 Lafayette to I-69 Major Corridor Investment Study has been completed along with the required environmental documentation. Construction has been completed on the section from Logansport to Fort Wayne. Construction on the remaining section from Lafayette to Logansport is expected to begin in 2010. The remaining two corridor studies have been completed, and their required environmental documentation will be completed by late 2008.

The Commerce Corridor Concept was incorporated into the Statewide Mobility Corridor System during a previous plan update. Additional discussion of the Commerce Corridor System and the Statewide Mobility Corridor System can be found in Chapter 6.

#### US 31 – INDIANAPOLIS TO SOUTH BEND

The US 31 study was completed in 1998 to evaluate the costs and benefits, including the economic development impacts, associated with an improved inter-city highway facility. The MCIBAS study process provided for analysis of major inter-city travel demand needs in a cost/benefit frame which allows the evaluation of local and private investment in economic development activities. The US 31 corridor extends from I-465 at Indianapolis to US 20 at South Bend, a distance of 122 miles. US 31 is a four-lane divided highway with varying degrees of access control depending on the roadway location. Concentrations of traffic signals and access points reduce the carrying capacity of the roadway in Hamilton County and in Kokomo in Howard County. Traffic forecasts projected an increase in vehicle miles of travel carried by US 31 by 60% by the year 2020 with average speed dropping by 9% if no improvements are made.

## Chapter 9 Corridor and Planning Studies

### INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

The US 31 study evaluated the potential improvement of the corridor to freeway standards, including total access control, 2 or more lanes in each direction, and posted speeds of 55 mph in urban and 65 mph in rural areas. The study estimated an improvement cost of \$0.9 billion (discounted). The freeway upgrade average free-flow speed would increase from 50 mph to 60 mph resulting in a decrease of Indianapolis to South Bend travel time of 35 minutes when accounting for the elimination of traffic signals. In evaluating the travel time savings, lower vehicle operating cost, and reduced accident costs an overall \$1.5 billion in user cost savings were identified.

#### US 31 Tolling Feasibility Study

The Indiana General Assembly mandated the Indiana Transportation Finance Authority to conduct a study of the need for and feasibility of constructing a new toll road from Indianapolis to South Bend. This study was done in conjunction with INDOT and was completed in 1999.

The study concluded that anticipated toll revenues would not be sufficient to pay the costs associated with the design, construction, maintenance, and operating expenses, and meeting the debt service requirements of the roadway.

#### US 31 Improvement Concept

The economic evaluation found the freeway upgrade would increase the market area for businesses along the US 31 corridor and improve travel conditions thereby lowering the cost of transportation. The improved transportation access was estimated to attract approximately 200 new jobs in the industries of motor vehicles and parts, metal products, rubber and plastics, electrical equipment, and retail trade. Overall, \$1.3 billion in economic impacts were identified over the analysis period.

The overall US 31 freeway upgrade project was found to have discounted benefits of \$2.9 billion and costs of \$0.9 billion resulting in a net benefit of \$2.0 billion. Three segments were identified for more detailed Major Investment and Environmental Studies. These segments were Hamilton County, Kokomo/Howard

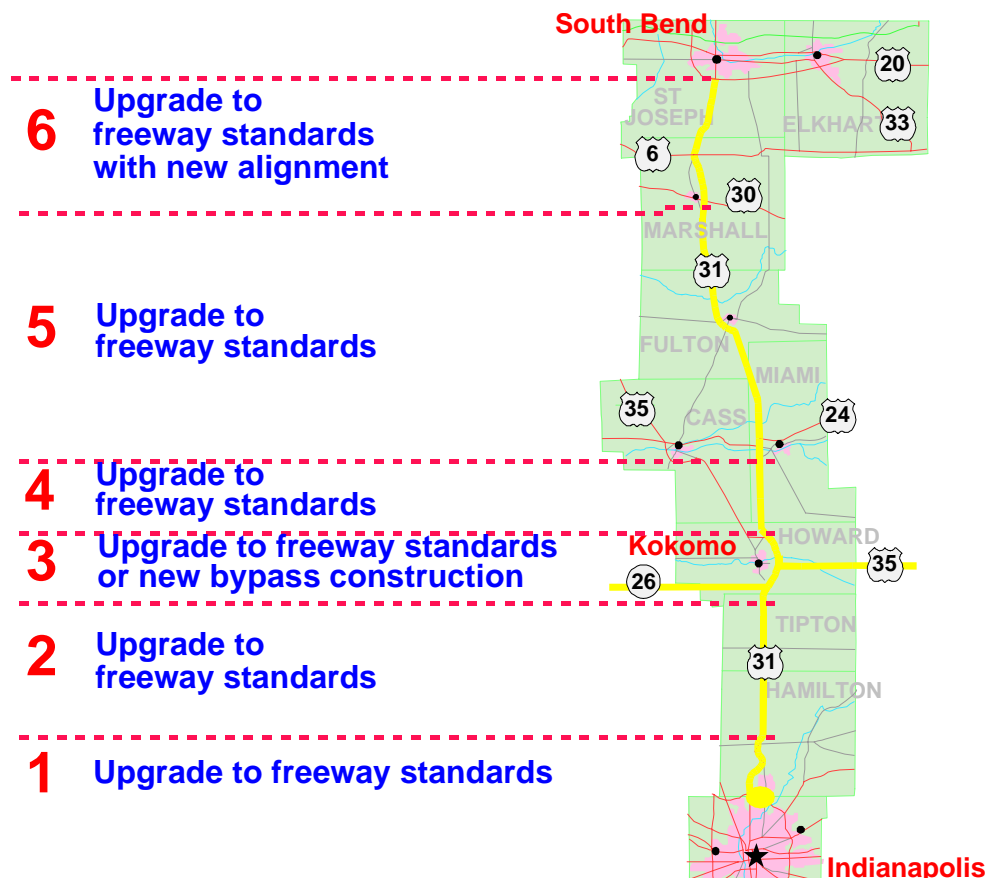


Figure 9 - 1

County, and Plymouth to South Bend. The individual Major Investment Studies have been completed and each section has entered the environmental phase of development.

#### **US 31 Hamilton County EIS**

The EIS for the US 31 corridor from Interstate 465 to SR 38 in Southern Hamilton County in the Carmel and Westfield areas is nearing completion. The Draft EIS was published in June 2003. The Final EIS is expected to be completed by early 2008.

#### **US 31 Kokomo/Howard County EIS**

This US 31 EIS in the Kokomo / Howard County area began in early 2002. The Draft EIS was published in early 2005. The FEIS was published in March, 2007. FHWA published a Record of Decision in May 2007.

#### **US 31 Plymouth to South Bend EIS**

This US 31 study from US 30 at Plymouth to US 20 at South Bend began in late 2001. The Draft EIS was published in February 2004, and named Alternative G-E as the preferred alternative. The FEIS was published in April 2006. FHWA published a Record of Decision in July 2006.

### **I-69 – EVANSVILLE TO INDIANAPOLIS**

Since the 1940s the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and its predecessor agencies considered an improved highway between Evansville and Indianapolis. Although the idea wasn't fully developed then, the idea continued to receive attention until the early 1990s. At that time, Congress selected an Evansville to Indianapolis highway as part of a national high priority transportation corridor, designated as Corridor 18 in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (known as ISTEA). By the late 1990s, Congress further determined that Corridor 18 would be a part of a national interstate highway project, I-69, which would improve connections between Canada, Mexico and the United States.

#### **Southwest Indiana Highway – Evansville to Bloomington DEIS**

An important element of an Environmental Impact Statement is an analysis of the economic impacts of the proposed improvement. While the traditional user benefits and costs were studied, an additional macroeconomic analysis took place as part of this study. This economic analysis included identification of benefits related to business expansion, business attraction, and tourism generated by the proposed improvement. The analysis indicated that the highway would enhance the attractiveness of Southwest Indiana for businesses looking for new locations, increase business expansions, and make the region more attractive to tourists by improving access to existing tourist attractions. This information was included in the approved Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Southwest Indiana Highway, which at the time was from I-64/164 at Evansville to SR 37 at Bloomington. This study was completed in 1996. In response to public and stakeholder, INDOT decided to expand the corridor northward to Indianapolis.

#### **I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis EIS Tier I**

In late 1999, a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) was initiated for the Evansville to Indianapolis portion of I-69. This EIS looked at a wide range of possible highway corridors to link Evansville and Indianapolis. At the outset of this EIS, the Purpose and Need for I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis was determined, and was based upon both Federal and State policies, as well as a comprehensive needs analysis using state-of-the-practice technical tools. Nine project goals for I-69 were developed that fall under the following three categories:

- Strengthen the transportation network in Southwest Indiana;
- Support economic development in Southwest Indiana; and,

## **Chapter 9 Corridor and Planning Studies**

### **INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan**

- Complete the portion of the National I-69 project between Evansville and Indianapolis.

Fourteen route concepts were initially analyzed and nine were eliminated for consideration. The remaining five alternatives underwent additional analysis. In December of 2003, a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for I-69 was issued. The FEIS responded to the comments made on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and added considerable information to that presented in the DEIS. The FEIS recommended Alternative 3C as the preferred corridor for I-69. The Federal Highway Administration selected Alternative 3C for I-69 in its Record of Decision (ROD) dated March 24, 2004. The ROD paved the way for the initiation of Tier 2 studies for I-69.

After the ROD was issued, INDOT began the current I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis Tier 2 Studies. In a continued effort to include the public in the transportation decision-making process, INDOT has divided the approved corridor into six sections, which are between 13 and 29 miles long. The corridor is 2,000 feet wide, and each of the six Tier II section study teams will determine the final alignment of the approximately 350-foot wide highway within the approved corridor.

#### **I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis EIS Tier II**

On March 24, 2004, the Federal Highway Administration issued a Record of Decision (ROD) approving a corridor for I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis for the I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis Tier I Study. This corridor, designated as Alternative 3C in the Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for I-69, is generally 2000 feet in width, although it is wider or narrower in some places.

FHWA and INDOT are now preparing six separate Tier II EISs for I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis. The Tier II EISs will determine the alignment, interchange locations and design characteristics of I-69 within the selected corridor, as well as develop more detailed mitigation measures. Based on the Tier I studies, it is anticipated that the actual right-of-way needed for I-69 will be between 240 and 470 feet wide, as compared with the 2000 foot width for the corridor.

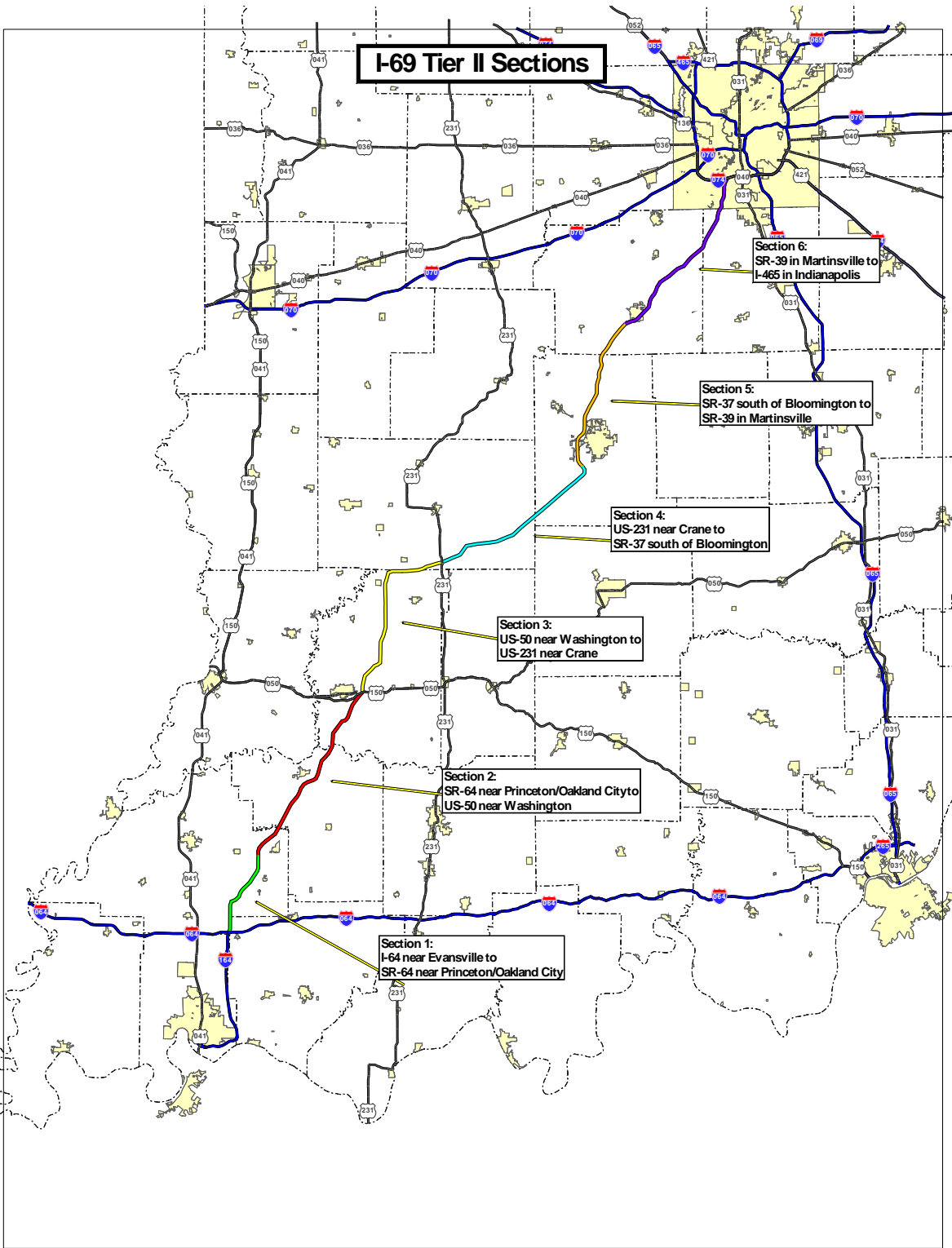
Each of the six Tier II EISs will examine a section of the selected corridor. The Tier II sections range in length from 13 to 29 miles. The termini for the Tier II sections were described in the Tier I EIS and were approved by FHWA in the Tier I ROD. These termini are:

- Section 1 from I-64 (near Evansville) via the SR 57 corridor to SR 64 (near Princeton/Oakland City)
- Section 2 from SR 64 (near Princeton/Oakland City) via the SR 57 corridor to US 50 (near Washington).
- Section 3 from US 50 (near Washington) via the SR 57 corridor and cross country to US 231 (near Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center).
- Section 4 from US 231 (near Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center) via cross country to the intersection of Victor Pike Road and State Road 37 (south of Bloomington).
- Section 5 from State Road 37 just north of the intersection of Victor Pike Road (south of Bloomington) via State Road 37 to State Road 39 (Martinsville).
- Section 6 from State Road 39 (Martinsville) via State Road 37 to I-465 (Indianapolis)

Each Tier II EIS will proceed on its own schedule. All are scheduled for completion between late 2007 and late 2008. A map of the individual sections can be found in **Figure 9-2**.

## **Active Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)**

Environmental documentation is required for Federal Actions. INDOT utilizes federal funds for many projects undertaken. A large-scale project that could have a significant impact on the social, natural, and economic environment of an affected area requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This study is conducted after, and builds upon the previously described planning studies that may



**Figure 9 - 2**  
**I-69 Tier II Sections**

## **Chapter 9 Corridor and Planning Studies**

### **INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan**

have been conducted earlier in project development. There are several milestones in the environmental process. The first is the development of a Purpose & Need Statement and the Identification of Preliminary Alternatives. Next, the alternatives are evaluated on the basis of their benefits, costs, and impact to the human and natural environment. Third, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is published selecting a preferred alternative. Fourth, based upon input from the public and stakeholders, the DEIS is modified and published as the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). After review and public comment, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will publish a Record of Decision (ROD) approving the document and completing the environmental process. INDOT will begin work to implement the preferred alternative. The following EISs are currently underway:

#### **I-69 Evansville / Henderson EIS**

I-69 from the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas at the United States/Mexico border to the dual termini of Port Huron, Michigan, and Detroit, Michigan, at the United States/Canada border has been designated by Congress as a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System. Thus, I-69 in Indiana is more than just the potential improvements from Evansville to Indianapolis and the existing roadway from Indianapolis to Michigan. INDOT, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and the Evansville Urban Transportation Study are conducting this EIS which addresses I-69 south of I-64 and across the Ohio River into Kentucky. The Draft EIS was completed in 2004.

#### **US 231 Dubois County EIS**

This US 231 EIS from Interstate 64 to north of Jasper in the Huntingburg and Jasper area examined options for improving this corridor in order to reduce congestion and travel time; provided an adequate level of service for forecasted traffic volumes; to enhance safety, support local community mobility needs, and accommodate regional transportation needs. The Draft EIS was published in early 2004. The Final EIS is expected to be ready in 2007.

#### **US 24 Fort Wayne to Toledo, Ohio, EIS**

The US 24 EIS from Interstate 469 at Fort Wayne to Interstate 475 at Toledo, Ohio has been completed. The Ohio Department of Transportation was the lead agency on this EIS. The Draft EIS was approved in 2003. The FEIS for US 24 New Haven to Defiance was completed in 2005; the ROD was issued soon after. Construction of the 4-lane divided highway is scheduled to begin in 2008 with the section between Indiana State Road 101 and the Indiana/Ohio state line. The remainder of the project is programmed for construction through 2011.

## **Completed Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)**

Since 2000, INDOT has completed work on many Environmental Impact Statements. Some of the most significant studies have been listed below. The studies' recommendations have been incorporated into the statewide plan.

#### **Indianapolis Northeast ConNECTIONS FEIS**

The Draft EIS was completed in 2001 and the Public Hearing was held on highway and transit corridor improvements in the northeast quadrant of Marion County and Southern Hamilton County. The highway recommendations were advanced into the Final EIS (FEIS) published in 2003. Expanded transit alternatives will undergo further, separate study, including analyzing the need for rail transit outside and in addition to the northeast corridor from downtown Indianapolis to Noblesville. A Record of Decision was published in early 2004.

#### **SR 25 Lafayette to Logansport EIS**

The State Road 25 (SR 25) Hoosier Heartland project is nearing the end of the environmental study stage of development. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published in August 2002 with three public hearings held along the corridor in October of that year. Public and participating agency comments on the DEIS were addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). On January 22, 2003, the

late Governor Frank O'Bannon announced Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for the Hoosier Heartland Highway between Logansport and Lafayette. The recommendation was based on the alternative's ability to meet the project's purpose and need, environmental design considerations, and input received during the public comment period. The FEIS was approved by the Indiana Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration on November 10, 2004.

### **Ohio River Bridges**

The Ohio River Bridges Project addresses the long term cross-river transportation needs in the Louisville-Southern Indiana region. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published in November 2001 analyzing nine specific bridge locations in one and two-bridge combinations. Public hearings were held in Indiana and Kentucky, and more than 5,000 comments were received on the DEIS.

A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was issued in April, 2003. This document identified the preferred alternative, responded to comments on the DEIS, and included a plan to minimize impacts to historic properties and other resources. The commitments are legally binding. They were developed in consultation with community representatives who will stay involved and monitor work to help ensure commitments are fulfilled.

After a detailed analysis that included extensive public outreach and involvement, The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) authorized the project in September 2003 in a Record of Decision (ROD).

The project is comprised of a new downtown bridge immediately upstream from the Kennedy Bridge (I-65); an east end bridge about eight miles from downtown, connecting the Gene Snyder Freeway (Ky. 841) to the Lee Hamilton Highway (S.R. 265); and a rebuild to the south of the Kennedy Interchange where I-64, I-65 and I-71 converge in downtown Louisville.

### **US 231 West Lafayette Environmental Document**

In 1987, a Draft EIS was completed for a relocation of US 231 from south of Lafayette to northwest of West Lafayette. The Final EIS was completed in 1992. The southern sections crossing the Wabash River and continuing northward on River Road opened to traffic in 2001. The middle segment from River Road to SR 26 is currently being designed. This study is preparing additional environmental documentation for the northern segment from SR 26 to US 52 west and northwest of West Lafayette and Purdue University in order to address concerns that recent residential development may have significantly affected the area, and require that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Study (SEIS) be conducted. This study recommended that Line 7-Option 2 be adopted as the preferred alternative.

### **US 24 Fort Wayne to Toledo, Ohio, EIS**

The US 24 EIS from Interstate 469 at Fort Wayne to Interstate 475 at Toledo, Ohio, has been completed. The Ohio Department of Transportation is the lead agency on this EIS. The Draft EIS was approved in 2003. The FEIS for US 24 New Haven to Defiance was completed in 2005; the ROD was issued soon after. Construction of the 4-lane divided highway is scheduled to begin in 2008 with the section between Indiana State Road 101 and the Indiana/Ohio state line. The remainder of the project is programmed for construction through 2011.

## **Indiana Streamlined EIS and Corridor/EA Planning Study Procedures**

In 2001, INDOT and FHWA released new streamlined procedures for environmental studies to establish a coordinated planning development process. These procedures are intended to address projects being developed under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) which may require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) but begins with the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) as a corridor planning study.

The new procedures were implemented to avoid the duplication of planning and public involvement activities between Major Investment Studies (MIS) and following project development studies conducted under the NEPA requirements. In several corridor planning studies, negative comments were received

## **Chapter 9 Corridor and Planning Studies**

### **INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan**

because controversial alternatives that study participants believed had been eliminated were re-evaluated when the NEPA “decision-making” process was initiated.

#### **Basic Elements:**

1. Establish a project coordination team to provide policy guidance to the development of a study.
2. Issue an early coordination letter to resource agencies, notifying them that FHWA is initiating a NEPA decision making process.
3. Establish two key coordinating points with resource agencies.
  - i. Purpose and Need and Preliminary Alternatives
  - ii. Preliminary Alternative Analysis and Screening
4. At each key coordinating point, an Agency Review Package will be prepared and submitted to the resource agencies to initiate a sixty-day Inter-agency review process. An Interagency Review meeting will be held thirty-days into the review period.
5. Complete DEIS (or EA/Corridor Study). The EA/Corridor Study will conclude that each study does or does not involve significant impacts. The EA/Corridor will identify for each segment of independent utility the purpose and need, and the preliminary alternatives retained for further study.
6. Transition of an EA/Corridor Study to an EIS. If FHWA determines that a project has significant impacts, a decision will be made to move forward with preparation of an EIS. Initially, more detailed studies will be conducted to prepare a DEIS. A coordination point with resource agencies will be established for review of the Preferred Alternatives and Mitigation. This will involve the preparation of an Agency Review Package and submittal to the resource agencies to initiate a sixty-day Inter-agency review process. An Interagency Review meeting will be held thirty days into the review period.
7. Complete the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision.

A detailed description of the Indiana Streamlined EIS and Corridor/EA Procedures is available on the FHWA’s Indiana Division website at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/indiv/eisproc.htm>.

## **Completed Corridor Studies**

Since 2000, eleven corridor studies have been initiated to investigate potential roadway improvements identified from needs analysis, and respond to Congressional mandates. Seven of these studies have been completed. The studies’ recommendations have been incorporated into the statewide plan as stated below.

### **US 231: I-70 to I-65 Corridor Improvement Study**

The US 231 corridor runs about 70 miles from I-70 in Putnam County, through Montgomery County to I-65 in Tippecanoe County. This route provides a north-south two lane principal arterial serving west-central Indiana. In the development of the Indiana portion of the original National Highway System (NHS), US 231 between I-74 and I-70 was evaluated to be included in the system but was eliminated in interests of minimizing system mileage. The 2002 NHS update effort, however, included a reexamination of this US 231 segment, resulting in addition of the segment to the Indiana portion of the NHS. This portion of US 231 has also been designated as a Statewide Mobility Corridor.

INDOT conducted a corridor feasibility study to establish the need to improve US 231 and make recommendations for roadway improvement projects if warranted. Key issues studied included: (1) the connection needs between SR 26 and I-65 in the Lafayette area including the current EIS between SR 26 and US 52, (2) examination of the needs for bypasses of Greencastle and Crawfordsville to address potential through truck and passenger car traffic in congested downtown areas, and (3) analysis of basic improvement plans for upgrading the roadway to four lanes and consider roadway relocation alternatives.



The Study was completed in March, 2003. It recommended a series of improvements to the US-231 Corridor including construction of a bypass of Greencastle and a potential bypass of Crawfordsville when traffic volumes warrant it. The Study identified eleven segments of independent utility requiring additional environmental analysis to refine the Study's recommendations

### **SR 101 Corridor Improvement Study**

The enhancement of transportation in Southeastern Indiana has been a long-term concern of INDOT. In 1991, a joint resolution of the Indiana General Assembly urged the extension of SR 101 through Switzerland County to US 50 to improve north-south travel within the region. Preliminary INDOT studies indicated a new SR 101 extension would not be cost effective.

In the development of the Major Corridor Investment Benefit Analysis System (MCIBAS) study process, consideration of the economic development impacts of improved highway access was combined into the traditional user cost/benefit analysis system. Since the early 1990s, several changes have occurred in Southeastern Indiana which affected the region's potential for economic development. These include: (1) the growth of the suburban Cincinnati region and its impact on Dearborn County, (2) the expansion of the tourism economy, and (3) major shifts in the multi-state economy due to the expansion of automobile related industries in Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio.

The INDOT corridor study was intended to identify and evaluate transportation improvements in a north-south corridor between the Markland Dam on the Ohio River in Switzerland County and I-74 in Dearborn and Ripley Counties. The evaluation of corridor improvement alternatives included:

1. User benefits such as travel time savings, lower vehicle operating costs, and reduced accident rates;
2. Economic impacts from improved highway access considering the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses, and the attraction of new tourism activity.

The study was completed in 2003. The study determined that Alternative 3B performed the best in meeting the purpose and need and should be implemented in three phases:

**Phase 1:** Identify specific locations with significant traffic operational and safety problems in Switzerland and Ohio Counties, and apply low-cost TSM-type operational improvements. Priority roadways should be SR 56 and SR 156.

**Phase 2:** Design and construct the southern portion of Alternative 3B between the Markland Dam and U.S. 50.

**Phase 3:** Design and construct the northern portion of Alternative 3B from U.S. 50 to I-74.

In reviewing the SR 101 Corridor Planning/Environmental Assessment Study and the comments received from the reviewing agencies, transportation stakeholders and the public, it is INDOT's decision not to include a new alignment SR 101 project connecting I-74 and the Markland Dam in the new 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan.

### **SR 62 Lloyd Expressway Corridor Planning Study**

The SR 62 Lloyd Expressway Corridor Planning Study evaluated the 5.5 mile corridor of the Lloyd Expressway from Eichoff Road (University of Southern Indiana entrance) to Fulton Avenue on the West Side of Evansville. The potential for upgrading the corridor to freeway standards was examined. In December 2002, a decision was made based upon the preliminary findings to upgrade the corridor to a freeway facility. The study was converted to an environmental assessment and project development was begun.

## **Chapter 9 Corridor and Planning Studies**

### **INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan**

#### **SR 9 Greenfield Corridor Improvement Study**

SR 9 in Greenfield experiences significant traffic congestion. The SR 9 study corridor has been initially established from US 52 to SR 234. In the 1998 TEA-21 legislation, a project to “Construct a SR 9 Bypass in Greenfield” was included as part of the Section 1602 Program for High Priority Demonstration Projects. The INDOT corridor feasibility study was intended to establish the essential need for improvements on SR 9, analyze basic improvement plans, and make recommendations to INDOT for the programming of improvement projects (if warranted). The study conducted an origin-destination traffic study to measure through-traffic patterns.

The study was completed in December, 2005. Based upon the results of the screening and evaluation process, and funding constraints, it was recommended that a series of local road improvements be pursued in lieu of major improvement on the state system

#### **SR 37 Noblesville to Marion Corridor Improvement Study**

SR 37 from Noblesville in Hamilton County, through Madison County and the community of Elwood, and connecting with Marion in Grant County was evaluated in a corridor improvement feasibility study. SR 37 is currently a four lane arterial roadway from I-69 to northeast of Noblesville where it becomes a two lane roadway. In 1989, a joint resolution of the Indiana General Assembly urged the widening of SR 37 to four lanes from Noblesville to Marion. INDOT conducted a highway improvement feasibility study in 1990 that found widening the roadway would not be cost effective. Since the early 1990s, the rapid growth of Hamilton County has created additional traffic growth on SR 37 in the greater Indianapolis area. In the 1998 TEA-21 legislation, a feasibility study of SR 37 improvements in Noblesville, Elwood, and Marion was included as part of the Section 1602 Program for High Priority Demonstration Projects.

INDOT conducted the SR 37 Corridor Improvement Study to: (1) Establish the essential need for improving SR 37, (2) Develop and analyze basic improvement plans ranging from the upgrade of SR 37 on its present alignment to relocation of portions or all of SR 37, and (3) Make appropriate recommendations for the programming of projects, if warranted. Due to the concerns over the economic development impacts, the evaluation of corridor improvement alternatives will include: (1) User benefits such as travel time savings, lower vehicle operating costs, and reduced accident rates, and (2) Economic impacts from improved highway access considering the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses.

The study was completed in June 2006. The study identified three segments of independent utility and advanced two alternatives per segment for detailed environmental analysis:

1. SR-32 to SR-13(South Junction) -- Reconstruct SR-37 as a four-lane expressway on existing or new alignment with consideration of a bypass of Strawtown.
2. SR-13(South Junction) to CR1300N – Reconstruct SR-37 as a four-lane expressway on existing or new alignment with consideration of a bypass of Elwood.
3. SR-13(South Junction) to CR1300N – Reconstruct SR-37 as a four-lane expressway or an improved 2-lane highway on existing or new alignment.

#### **US 36 Danville Corridor Improvement Study**

US 36 is the primary travel corridor connecting central and eastern Hendricks County and West-Central Indiana to Indianapolis. INDOT conducted the US 36 Corridor Improvement Study to:

1. Establish the essential need for improving US 36
2. Develop and analyze basic improvement plans ranging from the upgrade of US 36 on its present alignment to relocation of portions or all of US 36, and

3. Make appropriate recommendations for the programming of projects.

The study was completed in December 2004. It recommended that alternatives involving the construction of a new four-lane highway along either the north or south edge of the CSX Railroad be advanced for further study.

**Central Indiana Suburban Transportation Study**

The Central Indiana Suburban Transportation Study considered suburban mobility issues in the greater Indianapolis nine-county metropolitan area. The existing transportation problems and potential future transportation improvements were studied from a system --level perspective, including future demand levels, interaction with other elements of the regional roadway system (i.e. I-465), relationships to I-69 / National Corridor 18 options, and opportunities to meet localized needs. This study primarily addressed the area from I-465 outward to the nine-county boundary but also considered impacts and benefits to the urban core. This process examined the interrelationship of land use and transportation decisions, the role of public transit and the appropriate hierarchy of key transportation corridors within the nine-county area. An evaluation of ITS features, access control, travel demand management and other programs to increase system efficiency was included in the study. This study also assessed the regional impact of an outer beltway on the local and regional transportation system and on development patterns. The study ensured meaningful public involvement by initially convening a group of regional constituents and then developed smaller task force groups to deal with specific areas and issues. INDOT and the Indianapolis MPO conducted this cooperative study of the central Indiana region. The study was completed in October 2005. The study recommendations are being incorporated into future versions of the INDOT Long Range Transportation Plan.

## **Completed Corridor Studies**

Of the eleven corridor studies initiated since 2000, four are still active. As seen below, all of these studies are nearing completion. Once finished, the studies' recommendations will be reviewed by INDOT for incorporation into the statewide plan in future updates.

**US-50: Dearborn County Corridor Planning and EA Study**

The Indiana Department of Transportation has initiated a study of transportation needs and opportunities in the U.S. 50 corridor in Dearborn, Indiana. The objectives of this study are to assess the feasibility of improvements to the U.S. 50 corridor between Dillsboro and the IN-1/I-275/US-50 junction east of Lawrenceburg as well as other alternatives for improving mobility in eastern Dearborn County. Specifically, the study will:

- Establish the need for improving the US-50 corridor within the study area (including Dillsboro, Aurora, Greendale, and Lawrenceburg);
- Develop and analyze basic improvement alternatives including a comprehensive evaluation of the transportation, economic, and social impacts of these alternatives; and
- Provide project-specific data to be used by INDOT to score and rank improvements for programming purposes

The study is expected to be completed by June 2007.

**US-231/SR-46/SR-67: Spencer Corridor Planning and EA Study**

INDOT has begun a corridor planning study of US-231/SR-46/SR-67 in Spencer. The primary focus of this study is the highway between US-231/SR-67 and SR-46 west junction and US-231/SR-67 and SR-46 east junction. The roadway passes directly through the Town of Spencer and is approximately 0.85 miles

## **Chapter 9 Corridor and Planning Studies**

### **INDOT 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan**

in length. The general study area includes Washington Township in east-central Owen County. The goal of this study is to identify congestion and freight mobility issues with the purpose of:

- Improving roadway efficiency
- Improving roadway safety
- Meeting current geometric criteria

The study is expected to be completed by 2007.

#### **US-50: Dearborn County Corridor Planning and EA Study**

The US 50 – North Vernon Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment study is a study with the goal of determining the degree to which transportation needs/improvements that will reduce congestion, improve safety, and improve mobility along US 50 are:

- Establish the need for improving the US-50 corridor within the study area;
- Develop and analyze basic improvement alternatives including a comprehensive evaluation of the transportation, economic, and social impacts of these alternatives; and
- Provide project-specific data to be used by INDOT to score and rank improvements for programming purposes.

The study limits are from I-65 in Jackson County to Butlerville just east of North Vernon in Jennings County. The study is expected to be completed by September 2007.

#### **Indiana Interchange Study II**

Initiated in 2006, the Indiana Interstate Interchange Planning Study identifies a program of interchange modification and new interchange construction projects. The final report's recommendations will include a prioritized list of improvements and associated estimated costs per interchange.

This study updated the previous Interstate Interchange Evaluation Study, undertaken by INDOT in 2001. The interchange study will develop improvement recommendations and priorities for existing interchanges on the Interstate and Non-Interstate Highway System, and evaluate the feasibility and need for potential new interchange locations. Additional information on this study may be found in Chapter 7 Highway Needs Analysis.

## **Anticipated Transportation Planning Corridor & Subarea Studies**

The studies identified in this section are anticipated to begin in 2007 as part of the statewide plan development process. These studies were initiated to: (1) Establish the essential need for improving these corridors, (2) Develop and analyze basic improvement plans ranging from the upgrade of existing state highways on their present alignments to relocation of portions or all of these roads, and (3) Make appropriate recommendations for the programming of projects, if warranted. The evaluation of corridor improvement alternatives will include: (1) User benefits such as travel time savings, lower vehicle operating costs, and reduced accident rates, (2) Economic impacts from improved highway access considering the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses, and the attraction of new tourism activity, and (3) Impacts to the human and natural environments.

- US-421 Madison-Milton Bridge Planning Study and Environmental Assessment. This study will look at the replacement and/or relocation of this bridge in Madison, as well as the impacts to cross-river mobility in the region

- Illiana Expressway Planning Study and Environmental Assessment. This is a joint study between INDOT and the Illinois Department of Transportation. The study will look at congestion issues in Northwest Indiana especially on the Borman Expressway. It will explore the feasibility of constructing a new freeway connection between I-57 and I-65, as well as the impacts to the human and natural environments.

## **Summary**

The key element in making the transition from the system planning activities to the project development/programming process is the corridor planning process. This chapter outlines the corridor planning studies undertaken and anticipated to be conducted by INDOT as part of the statewide plan development process. These studies included the Major Corridor Investment Studies involving commerce corridors, several segments of US 31, the Ohio River, Northwest Indiana, and I-69 in Fort Wayne. Other corridor studies included US 31 from Indianapolis to South Bend, SR 25 from Lafayette to Logansport, Indianapolis Northeast ConNECTions MIS/DEIS, US 231 in Dubois County, and the Interstate Interchange Study.

Many of the projects in the Chapter 13 listing were derived from the corridor planning studies discussed in this chapter. Moreover, a major part of the duties of INDOT's Long Range Transportation Planning Section is to complete corridor planning studies. The planners not only assemble the Long Range Plan, but they also perform much of the work that goes into the development of the projects listed in the Plan.

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